



Self-Identity and Social Communication in Children who are Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing

Traci Henry, B.A., BHS

Faculty Advisor: Susan Lenihan, PhD, CED



Self-Identity in Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing (D/HH) Population

- ❖ In the current research, there was a reported relationship between self-identity and social communication development (Martin et al., 2010)
- ❖ Martin et al. explained that “children’s ability to communicate well with others affects both the formation of close relationships with others and the development of a positive identity” (Martin et al., 2010, p. 109)
- ❖ As children grow older, they may have to renegotiate their self-identity from a ‘hearing identity’ to that of having a hearing difference (Bat-Chava et al., 2013)
- ❖ Children who are D/HH need to integrate their self-identity to that of having a hearing difference, which can impact social competence if integrated well (Dalton, 2011)
- ❖ Students who self-identified as D/HH were more likely to also identify as lonely (Kent, 2003)
- ❖ This is especially true if the students were the “one and only” in their school (Anderson, 2018).

Definitions:

Self-Identity: “one’s sense of self and to how one is labelled in a social context” (Dalton, 2011)

Social Communication: “the use of language in social contexts. It encompasses **social interaction, social cognition, pragmatics, and language processing**” (American Speech-Language-Hearing-Association [ASHA], n.d.)

Media Representation: “the ways in which the media portrays particular groups, communities, experiences, ideas, or topics from a particular ideological or value perspective” (Te Kete Ipurangi [TKI] Media Studies, n.d.)



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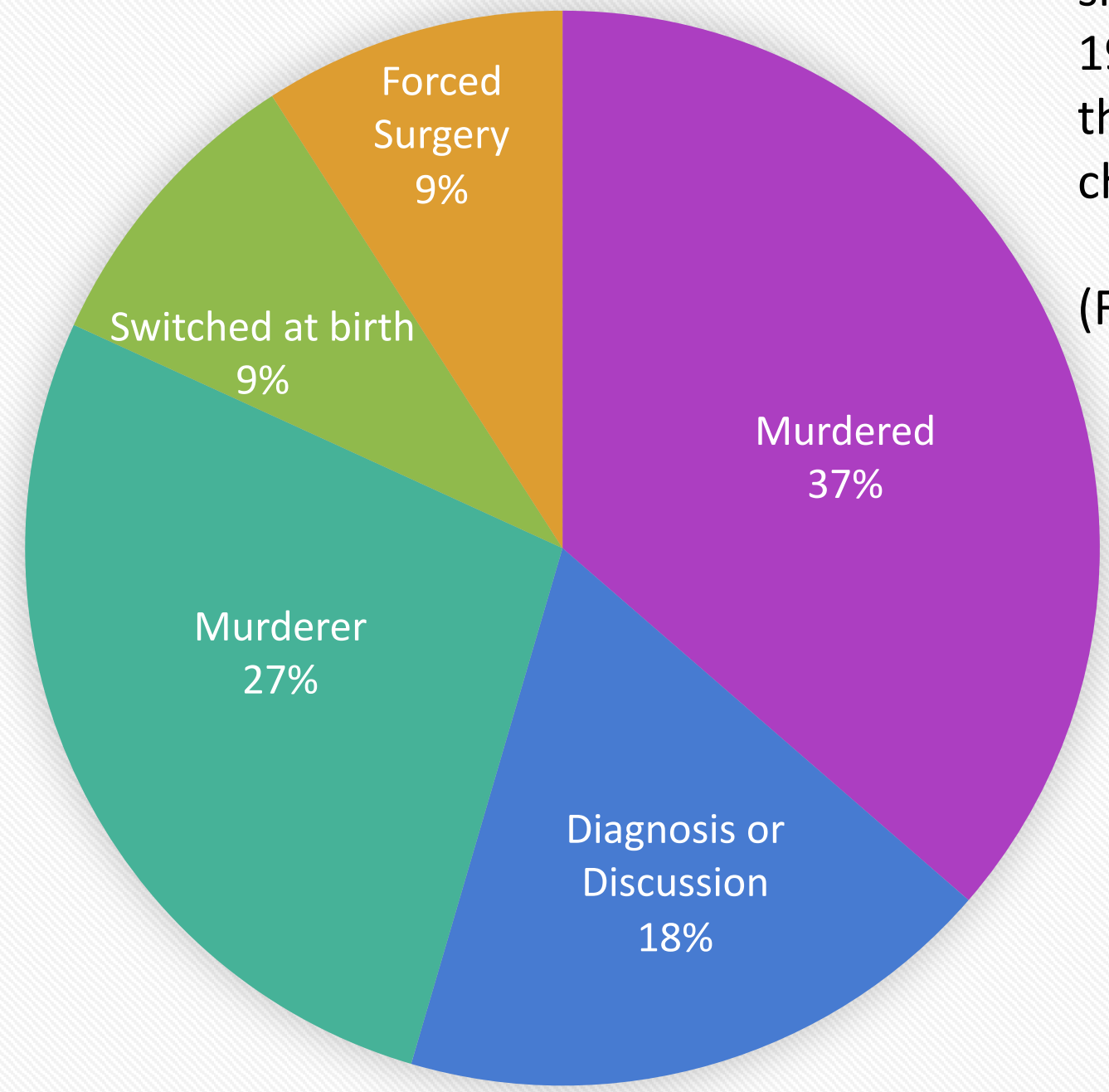
Social Communication in D/HH Population

- ❖ Higher self-esteem was related to higher levels of social communication skills (Theunissen et al., 2014)
- ❖ Children who are D/HH were reported to have more difficulty with making friends, conversational skills, entry into a peer group, and turn-taking skills (Bat-Chava et al., 2013)
- ❖ It was also observed that children initially appeared to have typical social communication skills when they were first implanted with a cochlear implant (CI) or given hearing aids (HA), but began to “lag behind” as they grew older (Bat-Chava et al., 2013)

Media Representation of People who are D/HH and Use Devices

- ❖ Foss (2014) analyzed representation of d/Deaf characters in TV shows between 1987 and 2013
- ❖ The research included 48 total television programs and 254 episodes. Out of 48 total television programs, only 11 programs featured a character who had a CI
- ❖ 64% of the 11 programs had a storyline description listed as “murderer”, “murdered”, “victim”, or “serial killer” (Foss, 2014)
- ❖ Very little representation of CIs in television and often a negative connotation

Storyline of Television shows with Characters who use a CI



11 television shows between 1987 and 2013 that feature characters with CIs (Foss, 2014)

Why does Representation Matter?



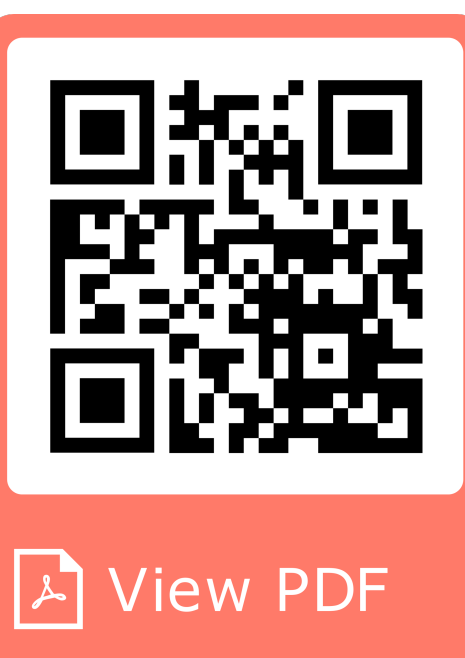
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- ❖ Media may provide negative representations of individuals who are D/HH and reinforce stigma (Foss, 2013) and negative media messages can become internalized (Zhang & Haller, 2013)
- ❖ Media representation can have an impact on social minorities and their perception of self-identity (Zhang & Haller, 2013)
- ❖ There was a noted relationship between positive media representation of people who are social minorities and positive self-identity (Zhang & Haller, 2013)

What Can Professionals Do?

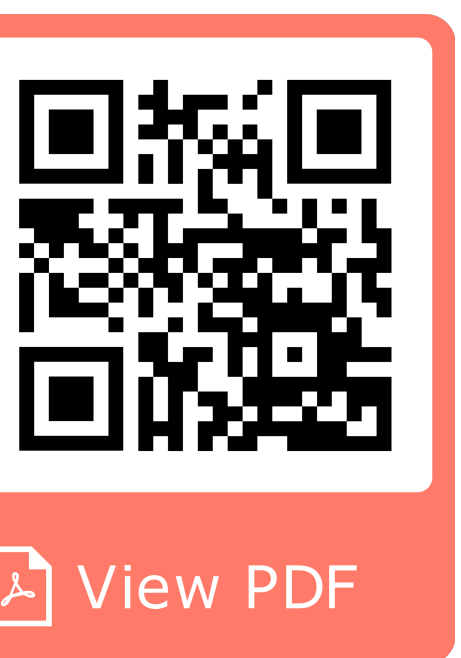
- ❖ Use images, characters, dolls, and other items that feature people with HAs and CIs
- ❖ Foster discussions of differences and encourage integration of positive identity (Dalton, 2011)
- ❖ Assess social communication skills and provide support in cooperative play and peer entry skills (Martin et al., 2010)

References



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Contact Information:

henryt@fontbonne.edu